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ABSTRACT

The Lifelong Learning Center at the Reading Public Library conducted a study to determine how the clients perceived various aspects of the center's activities in terms of their needs and expectations. A survey was mailed to 329 clients; the response rate was 51%. Survey questions asked about (1) clients' satisfaction with access conditions, staff interaction, and information exchange; (2) clients' recollection of importance of needs and information at the time of contact; and (3) clients' perception of the outcomes and importance of the outcomes. Other questions concerned the clients' view of "how it all turned out," feelings about life generally, reactions to antonyms, and readiness to recommend to others. Interviews were conducted to determine how the experience fitted into the person's life. Analysis of responses revealed that persons who received either counseling or information reported high satisfaction levels with services accessibility, information quality, and staff relationships. The most valuable center asset was perceived as the interpersonal staff exchange. Outcomes included 69 enrollments in colleges, schools and courses and 32 reportedly favorable job adjustments. No serious program omissions were uncovered. There was a high level of satisfaction with the program's development and readiness to recommend it to others. (The survey instruments are included.) (CSS)

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A CLIENT REACTION ANALYSIS: FINAL REPORT FOR
THE LIFELONG LEARNING CENTER
READING, PA.

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PREFACE

This report had its origins in the same wellsprings of creative curiosity that led to the establishment of the Lifelong Learning Center itself. Having built the Center and referral network from its foundations since January 1977, the Director of the Reading Public Library, Edmund Doherty, and his LLC staff wanted to know more about how their clients saw the program and what consequences interaction with the Center had for them. To look carefully at client reaction in so early a stage of operation was a bold and promising decision. To invite an independent agent to examine the questions was an even more courageous choice. Timing was excellent. If practices were to be confirmed and strengthened or if policies were to be altered, this was the time to know.

Because the idea behind the Lifelong Learning Center was new and the prospects educationally exciting, the Center for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE) at The Pennsylvania State University was interested. In the last ten years CSHE has served the broad interests of postsecondary education in Pennsylvania by conducting research and analysis on topics that stand at the forefront of educational practice. From the design phase through the final analysis and conclusions the investigators were accorded not only that freedom which is a condition of all academic research but also the cooperation of all those who have translated the Lifelong Learning Center into an organization that serves well the interests of adults in the Reading-Berks County area.

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SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

In looking at these conclusions, what must be kept constantly in view is the enormity of the task with which the Lifelong Learning Center is engaged. Clients from all walks of life, all ages, varied levels of educational background, and a wide rank of income groups are invited by open advertisement to use the Center services. Their needs and interests lead toward all corners of the educational and business worlds. Although initial association with the Center is the focal point of this inquiry, the final reaction of the client may be shaped elsewhere in the network of referrals that represent the fullest dimensions of an adult counseling process.

1. Overall, the persons who received either counseling or information from the Lifelong Learning Center report high levels of "satisfaction" with the accessibility of services, quality of information, and relationships with the staff. Cases of dissatisfaction on individual items rarely included more than 4 responses. The excellent level of satisfaction is established in the ratings, confirmed by the written comments, and reinforced by telephone interviews. (pp. 21, 22, 23, Appendix C)
2. The central and most valuable asset of the Center as perceived by the sample of clients is the interpersonal exchange with the staff. The positive qualities of this encounter for client decision making, for the shared humanity and concern it transmitted to clients, and for the attention to individual interests perceived by the clients--these are reflected in every measure of reaction whether ratings, comments, or interviews. (pp. 21, 22, 23, 29)
3. There were substantial real outcomes for a significant number of participants even though the time span covered in this study is relatively short. Enrollment in colleges, schools, and courses was reported by 69 individuals and 32 respondents reported favorable job adjustments.
4. The breadth of information provided under the present operating plan of the LLC and the kinds of services offered on site are apparently congruent with the needs and interests of clients who now contact the Center. That is to say

clients rate what is going on as "important" to them. Neither interviews nor questionnaire responses uncovered any serious omissions in the program or significant negative evaluations. (pp. 34, 35, 36)

5. The topics dealt with by the Center and listed in the survey instrument have a high level of importance for the clients. Matters of career and education are perceived as "real" and appropriate issues for concern, inquiry, and action. No item was omitted by all respondents. Few clients added items other than those listed. (pp. 30, 32, 33, 34)
6. Beyond the high levels of satisfaction with the initial contact at the Lifelong Learning Center lie suggestions that widen reaches of referral and some follow-up procedures are not fully effective. The number of such negative responses is not large, scarcely a dozen in all the ratings, open-ended answers, and interviews, but where they appear, feelings are strong. This reaction may actually be an assessment of the whole program which includes the network of agencies, employers, schools, and offices far beyond the LLC and its specific area of responsibility. At most, this line of reaction implies that occasional follow ups through the referral system might be introduced to monitor program effectiveness. (pp. 28, 40, 41)
7. The collection and retention of basic information about clients, particularly those who are counseled, is an important function. In the case of information seekers it is not feasible to get personal data from each caller but a sampling scheme to get it from every tenth inquirer would suffice. The name, address, telephone number, area of interest, occupation, and educational level constitute a minimum data set. Difficulties with the data stem entirely from the early stages of operation, January and February 1977, before the current practices were established. (pp. 10, 11, 12)
8. Although the responses focused on individual reactions of clients to their own situation, they also touch a larger question. Taken together the results shed more than a few rays of light on the question of whether the Center is providing a needed service. The most direct evidence comes from interviews where subjects identified previous contacts which did not give what they were seeking. The high level of satisfaction with "the way it all turned out" and the readiness to "recommend to others" also emphasize the usefulness of the Center to the community. (pp. 37, 38, 39, 40, 41)

A CLIENT REACTION ANALYSIS: FINAL REPORT

A. Introduction

The Lifelong Learning Center at Reading, Pennsylvania, has been engaged for nearly a year with one of the major educational introductions of the 1970s. The experience of learning has gradually come to be acknowledged not only as a principal preparatory or socializing mechanism of childhood and youth and an avenue of adjustment to change in the middle years, but also as a process essential to living. Learning is now seen to be one means by which individuals come to understand, decide, and act on changes in the surrounding world as well as changes in the life space of each person. Much, perhaps even most, of this learning takes place beyond the ages at which formal schooling is an expected and available part of the environment. Coming to grips with this new formulation of how learning and life interact has presented a formidable challenge for thinkers and practitioners at all levels in the postsecondary community. Several stages of formulation have emerged. The first stage, from about 1968 to 1975, was filled with efforts to develop an overarching definition for the phenomenon of learning beyond school. From this stage emerged the idea of "lifelong learning" which gained acceptance as a label before it was fully understood.

The second stage, still with us, involves identifying and stipulating the needs of adults. The third stage is taken up by the development of systems at the community, state, and national level to satisfy those needs and interests. The two latter stages are developing in parallel and will occupy our attention for the next quarter century.

The Lifelong Learning Center is at the forefront of efforts that aim at developing ways to identify, clarify, inform, and support the learning decisions of adult life whether they be connected with further education or with a career modification. Principles and practices that emerge from this endeavor, once they are treated to forthright examination, will be of immense value in shaping public policies and personal understanding. These in turn can provide guidance and support to organizations that provide educational services for adult learners. Judging by the current range of interests, that list is likely to be much more varied than any other major educational introduction has ever been. Unlike the situation among the young where school has a clear and prominent position in life, education for adults may play dozens of roles in company with a wide range of other factors. This report, as detailed and comprehensive as time and basic data would permit, gives an early reading, a summary reading, on what one group of clients perceive in their relationship with the Center at Reading. It also captures from telephone interviews with some 20 clients interesting evidence of how the contact with the Lifelong Learning Center fitted into the structure of the client's life.

The largest share of the information was collected by a mailed survey and the resulting data analyzed by customary statistical techniques. The emphasis in this report is on a description of the aggregated views of clients with the Lifelong Learning Center rather than on the subtleties of research inference.

This is not an evaluation study. In any form, an evaluation involves a comprehensive and comparative judgment. To even begin such a process

at the Lifelong Learning Center would require an examination of purpose and mission, the staff reactions, investigations of referral effectiveness, and a definition of the potential client group. Yet one may say unequivocally that client reaction in the first year of operation is especially important. What is described here is the initial reaction of clients, the first reflections on their experience. Even with all its tentativeness these responses can be of considerable assistance to staff, planners, and sponsors. Since work with adults on the intricate questions which bring them to the Lifelong Learning Center is often a matter of long-range outcomes, it is most necessary that the limitations of this investigation and the short-run effects it records be kept in clear perspective.

In the sections to follow the first topic addressed is the approach selected by the LLC. This leads to a description of the clients who have used the services in the last nine months and to the sample of clients who participated in this project. In survey studies it is particularly important to see the design of the project because that largely determines what shall be included and, sometimes more important, what must be left out. The findings are discussed in detail under topical headings in order that all the information from various sources can be brought to focus. Finally there is a set of observations about the project and the possibilities it suggests.

B. Setting and Description of the Sample

1. Effective Adulthood

Concern for an effective life throughout adulthood is widespread, but as yet no one of the experimental approaches designed to improve the quality of adult life by counseling and education has proved its superiority. These experimental forms cover an exceedingly wide range from completely new institutions like the University of Mid-America, Empire State University, or Community Councils on Economic and Social Coordination to educational mechanisms like credit for life experience. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has elected to make modest experiments with lifelong learning services of several types in a variety of institutional settings. The notion of counseling centers comes forward as the organizational form that has the fewest restraints or obligations to tradition. Acceptance of a proposal for a Lifelong Learning Center at Reading has been one of the most promising and visible efforts to step into this educational future.

The Center can offer supplementary services to increase the effectiveness of other agents of assistance already present in corporations, colleges, schools, universities, and public agencies. There are several basic assumptions underlying the introduction of an adult center: First, there is assumed to be a large subpopulation of adults who could benefit by completing, extending, or modifying their educational base and the competencies it provides. For the most part, these adults are no longer connected with the institutional stream of schools and colleges to provide the scope of counseling and information services they need to make individual decisions. Second, many adults, it is assumed, are ready and willing but not entirely able to alter their conditions of work. Confined to a particular job

setting, they are unable to develop the information needed to plan for change. A key feature of the concept of effective adulthood in our society is recognition that individuals must have ways of responding to the sharp and frequent changes in the business world brought on by technological development.

Third, the adult population often faces personal and psychological constraints arising from the inertia of the situation and apprehensions about the effects of change. Under these conditions of situational constraint on the job and confinement to an institutional track in education a skilled agent of change can help to develop the comprehensive perspective that must precede a decision. The Center and its trained counseling staff can provide both the information and the psychological support for a synoptic view of one's life. That can abet and inform, but not make or even coerce, the decisions of individuals.

2. LLC Reading and its Approach

The Lifelong Learning Center at Reading began its operations in December 1976. In defining the mission for this Center, the Director took a pragmatic view which, as it turns out, provided a very solid base. A clear decision was made to emphasize information and counseling foregoing for the moment activities such as the evaluation of credentials or direct advocacy of client interests to institutions. It was recognized that the fund of information about education and careers was already rich. There is, as well, a rather complete network of corporations, institutions, and agencies in the Reading-Berks County area able to sustain and develop individual decisions about either careers or education. What was clearly missing in the landscape of the adult community was a vehicle, an interactive option, to deliver appropriate combinations of information to

individuals and sustain them through the decision process. The library, of course, is a rich depository for data but the capacity to process it in individualized ways is somewhat limited. For this reason, the principal mission of the Center was to improve the transfer of information through the mediation of specialized counselors. This kind of operation depended on a pair of concomitant activities: (a) the codification, regularization, and separation of specialized information sources in the library and elsewhere, (b) the construction of a specialized referral network reaching out to institutions, agencies, corporations, and key individuals in the community so that clients' interests could be realistically developed. During the period under study, the staff consisted of two fulltime counselors--one, with training in the counseling field, the other with advanced training in library science. A receptionist and clerical support as needed were assigned. The project director participated on a part-time basis combining his interests in the Center with his duties as Director of the Reading Public Library. Physical facilities were made available on the second floor of the downtown library building and consisted of a conference area which included display boards, semipartitioned interview stations, and a receiving area. The spaces present an open, pleasant, and colorful aspect to the visitor.

The study reported here was designed to search, within this framework of mission, functions, and operations, for perceptions the clients had of what was going on. Information about other follow-up studies was not neglected however. The National Center for Educational Brokering was helpful in identifying other significant efforts including the Regional Learning Center of Central New York and the extensive analysis

made by the Educational Testing Service out of the Career Education Project (CEP) in Rhode Island. Even though this search of the literature provided general information, the final inquiry was tailored entirely to the interests of the Reading Center.

3. The Clients and the Survey Sample

By July 1977, six months after the official opening, the Lifelong Learning Center at Reading had counted 1,653 individual contacts. The overwhelming majority, 1,340 cases, were tallied as "information seekers." Those client contacts that involved a meeting with the counselors numbered 313 and are designated "counselees" in the subsequent pages.

Basic information accurate enough to support a general mailing was available for only a handful of the "information seekers," a condition which annulled any chance of constructing a representative sample of the group. For the counselees there was not only mailing information but also background information on age, education, and job activity. However, the number of 313 contacts was reduced by removals and multiple reportings to about 200 persons for the mailing list. Although these exigencies do not impair the validity of individual answers, they signal great caution to anyone seeking to draw general inferences from the data. Most of the major reactions are so strong that they leave little doubt about the favorable views of the counseled group. The reactions of the "information seekers," however, are just straws of opinion in the wind because we know so little about their silent and unidentifiable companions. The clues to dissatisfaction are also to be viewed with caution. The differences are small throughout and few reach a level of statistical significance by the conventional tests we have applied.

Table 1 shows how the responses from the 329 individuals included in the sample were distributed. The response rate of 51 percent is above the level usually expected in random mailings but below the level which might provide assurance that a full range of client views are included. The possibility of comparing nonrespondents with the participants is denied by the absence of names and addresses for the missing group.

Table 2 displays some of the basic background information for the tabulated cases in the sample. The actual returns numbered 165 as of November 1, 1977, but the computer runs included 155 omitting ten late returns.

Table 1

Description of Sample and Response Rate

A	Number Mailed (A)	Post Office Returns (B)	Net Contacts	Usable Responses (C)	Late Responses (D)	Total Returns (E)	Response Rate (E/A-B)
Counselees	200	8	192	107	2	109	.57%
Information Only	129	3	126	48	6	54	.43%
Totals	329		318			163	.51%

B	Volunteered for Interviews	Interview Completed
Counselee Interviews	39	22

Table 2

Description of Tabulated Sample: Selected Characteristics

										(10 days)			
A. Month of Contact:	<u>Fall 76</u>	<u>Jan 77</u>	<u>Feb 77</u>	<u>Mar 77</u>	<u>Apr 77</u>	<u>May 77</u>	<u>June 77</u>	<u>July 77</u>	<u>Aug 77</u>	<u>No Info</u> *	<u>Number</u>		
	9	13	16	22	15	27	17	17	6	13	155		
B. Level of Schooling:	<u>0-7</u>	<u>Some High School</u>	<u>High School Diploma</u>	<u>Some College</u>	<u>Assoc. Degree</u>	<u>Bacc. Degree</u>	<u>Grad. Degree</u>			<u>No Info</u>	<u>Number</u>		
	2	5	41	21	6	14	13	102	100%	53	155		
C. Age:	<u><20</u>	<u>21-25</u>	<u>26-30</u>	<u>31-35</u>	<u>36-40</u>	<u>41-45</u>	<u>46-50</u>	<u>51-55</u>	<u>56-60</u>	<u>61-65</u>	<u>> 65</u>	<u>No Info</u>	<u>Number</u>
	9	18	14	20	8	7	14	4	2	2	2		155
D. Sex:	<u>Male</u>			<u>Female</u>			<u>No Info</u>		<u>N</u>				
	35			72			48		155				
	33%			67%									

* For those seeking information only, 54 of the respondents, much of the basic data was not available.

C. Design of the Study

Research in such a new setting offered many options for design, many questions of an exploratory type that could be asked. Arbeiter (1976) wove his study of the Career Education Project in Rhode Island around the idea of a "demand" for counseling arising from a population "in transition." The Regional Learning Services of Central New York State study concentrated on educational needs, interests, and outcomes (Kordalewski 1977). Gooler (1977) has recommended that considerations of quality, access, relevancy to needs and expectations, and impact be introduced when non-traditional programs are examined.

1. The Survey Instrument (Appendix A)

Because the primary mission of the Reading Center was so clear--providing information for effective action--it was possible to focus this study on client perception. How did the client perceive various aspects of Center activity in the light of his or her needs and expectations? The question was separated into several parts:

- a. Conditions of access, the nature of interaction with the staff, and aspects of the information exchange were presented to the subjects in terms of "satisfaction" judgments.
- b. The clients' recollection of needs and information at the time of contact with the Center were assessed by them in terms of "importance." These might be thought of as "inputs."
- c. The particular results or outcomes were listed so that they ran in gradations from behaviors completed to inactivity. In addition to selecting the applicable outcomes these items were also rated by importance to the client.

d. Other questions: Beyond the orderly set of topics are several sets of questions on the instrument that, though not unrelated, stand by themselves.

- (1) The affective outcomes: changes in feelings may well be the crucial element in adult life changes. A set of antonyms was presented for scaled choice to gain some measure, however slight, of this reaction. This was an experimental adaptation of a question format that has been used in other kinds of questionnaires.
- (2) In looking at the "Quality of Life," Andrews, Withey, and Converse demonstrated close relationship between global measures and sectoral measures. Two global questions about the clients' outlook were included, one dealing with the Center experience, "how it all turned out," the other with the person's "feelings about life as a whole."
- (3) Behaviors to diffuse knowledge about the Center have special importance and two questions on the topic were included.

Taken together, these sections of the survey instrument give a straightforward pattern of design. Clients were asked to evaluate the process of coming to the Center, interacting with personnel, and carrying away the results for further action. They are asked to identify their expectations at the time of contact and to indicate the kind of information they were looking for to support those actions. Throughout there were opportunities for open comment on points other than those covered by items in the instrument.

2. Interviews (Appendix B)

There are many limitations to the use of questionnaires as a method of assessing individual human experiences. Responses are necessarily fragmented by the structure of the inquirer's statements. Important interactions easily escape and peripheral influences are often unidentified. For adults, schooling and change are not central to day-to-day living. They must be planned for and fitted into life. To discover how people fitted their contact with the Lifelong Learning Center into the larger framework of life was the aim of the interview. Originally the interview document was planned as a structured schedule but after a pretest it was altered to a more open design. The topics covered included: motivation for contacting the Center, other previous contacts with agencies, persons with whom topics were discussed, and other life experiences related to the contact with the Center.

In summary, the survey instrument concentrated on how the Center was viewed and the interview concentrated on how the experience fitted into the person's life.

3. The Analytic Approach

The project was conceived in terms of description, carried out by summary and by internal comparisons. The survey document was constructed in consultation with the counselors and incorporated a few items from other learning center studies, from standard psychological tests of attitudes and feelings, and from national survey projects. A pretest session involving completion of the questionnaire and an interview about questions or confusions was conducted.

Response choices were all scaled on a five-point directional basis with "five" as the high value for "very satisfactory" or "very important." Open-ended questions and answer options were included where appropriate.

Data were first summarized in frequency tables. These provide a description of the ratings in terms of mean scores, medians, and standard deviations. Appendix C scores give indications of "satisfaction" and "importance" attached to each item as it appeared on the survey instrument. All responses, even those which came in late, are included in this section.

A second stage of analysis involved a search for significant differences among various subgroups of the sample. Cross tabulations were made on all rated items using age, education, marital status, sex, and "feelings about life as a whole" as the control variables, that is to say the dependent variable. For each table, values of chi square, Kendall's Tau (B), Eta, Cramer's V, and Gamma were examined. No critical levels were established for these values but they were taken as clues to differences and associations.

Comments on the open-ended questions were too few to warrant coding but they were analyzed for content and grouped for discussion under appropriate variables.

The 22 interview protocols were content analyzed and key phrases introduced to illustrate particular points under each of the variables.

Throughout, the aim has been to cover as many explicit aspects as possible. Apparently the design comes very close to the limits of toleration because one person noted "you ask too many questions . . . form becomes boring." The variables are listed below together with the items which are used to evaluate them.

LIST OF VARIABLES

Questions or Items

Background variables: from records on counselees only

Age

Sex

Marital status

Level of education

Occupation

Date of first contact with LLC

Part I: SatisfactionAccess:

Q1 Hours of operation

Q4 Location

Q5 Telephone contact

Q9 Opportunity to explain

Q11 Number of meetings

Q3 Time spent in follow up

Interaction with Staff:

Q2 Amount of time staff gave

Q6 Willingness and receptivity

Q7 Amount of attention to your needs

Q8 Competence of staff

Q15 Level of comfort you felt

Information

- Q10 Specific information you expected
- Q12 Accuracy of the information
- Q13 Timeliness
- Q14 Service at referral agencies

Part II: Identified as significant; rated as important.Needs at time of first contact

Career related

Education related

Information requirements at first contact

Career related

Education related

Part III: Identified as significant; rated as important.Results

Actions completed: job related

Actions completed: education related

Planning actions: job related

Planning actions: education related

Information gathering: education related

Information gathering: job related

Life improvements: unrelated to job or education

No activity

Part IV: Affective Outcomes: changed feelingsPart V: Diffusion of information about Center

Transmitted information to others

Recommended to others

Other: Global Judgments

- Q 16 How the experience with LLC "turned out."
Q111-B Feelings about "life as a whole."

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- Q2 Motivation to contact Center
Q4 Prior sources contacted
Q5 Contacts after Center
Q6 With whom was information discussed?
Q7 Actions based on information
Q8 Other major decisions in your life
Q9 Continuing intervening problems
Q3 Library user? How often?

D. Findings and Detailed Information

1. Reading the Results

When reading the results, it is convenient to keep the scale points in mind: the top value is "5" signifying a rating of "very satisfactory" in Part I, or "very important" in the later sections of the survey instrument. The mid-point is a value of "3" and the low point is "1," "very unsatisfactory." A value of zero is reserved for "no answer." The highest mean value in all the data is 4.6 and the lowest rating is 3.0.

In the first section dealing with client satisfaction, the respondents were asked to rate every statement because, presumably, every one fitted their experience. In Parts II and III, a slightly different process is involved. Here respondents are presented with a list of items. They are asked to, first, pick those which are applicable to their experience, and second, rate the selected items for importance.

Throughout the evaluations are highly favorable and the ratings are high. We can get good indications but not strongly significant conclusions from internal comparisons of choice and rating. There are no glaring deficiencies uncovered by this survey. On the other hand, there are hints and clues in the ratings and comments about aspects of operation that deserve a careful second look.

Each section deals with a major variable, e.g., "access," "needs," etc. and incorporates all the information about it. The series dealing with "satisfaction" has been placed in order of importance reflected by client ratings. In other sections, too, an effort has been made to treat strongest factors first.

Table 3

Interactions with Staff: Distribution of Ratings by Items

	<u>Very Satis- factory</u>	<u>Satis- factory</u>	<u>Neither Sat. Nor Unsatis- factory</u>	<u>Unsatis- factory</u>	<u>Very Satis- factory</u>	<u>No Answer</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>
Willingness and receptivity of staff	72	33	0	0	0	(2)	4.6	0.78
Opportunity to explain	88	46	11	2	0	(8)	4.5	0.69
Level of comfort in discussion	56	43	5	0	0	(3)	4.4	0.95
Amount of attention to you	60	39	4	1	0	(3)	4.4	0.97
Competence of staff	57	42	3	1	0	(4)	4.3	1.05

(N = 155)

2. Rated Variables

a. Interaction with Staff (Table 3)

Without question the strongest favorable ratings, the fewest unsatisfactory ratings, and the fewest "no answers" were given on that group of questions which touched relationships with the staff. This highly favorable response was reinforced in detail by open-ended comments at the end of Part I, in Part III-C, which provided for personal reactions. The interviews, too, were favorable. The deepest impressions on clients were made by the willingness and receptivity of the staff in addressing questions raised by the clients. On their side of the counseling dialogue, clients were very satisfied with the opportunities they had to present their own interests and needs. The lowest mean scores in this group of items were to ratings about the competence of the staff, not so much because of high dissatisfaction but rather because of differences in judgements about the level of satisfaction. This is reflected in the somewhat higher standard deviation (1.05) among respondents.

When one turns to an examination of the differences in satisfaction that might have been associated with age, sex, educational level, marital status, etc. in the cross tabulations, there are no significant differences and the wide basis of approval is evident. If pressed to make distinctions, one can find a very slight decline in satisfaction among those whose global view of life is already pleasant and those with more education, possibly an evidence of the "ceiling effect."

More clearly than any numbers, the phrases used by respondents in open answers stand as basic illustrations of sound counseling and good rapport. The phrases themselves that appear under sources of "particular

satisfaction" (I-B) pinpoint the sources of satisfaction: "the extra effort and sincere interest of the staff," "they gave me ideas to follow," "they didn't rush me like (sic) I was a number instead of an individual," "the friendliest of counselors," "personal attention and interest," "approachability and competence," "the enthusiastic and encouraging attitudes of the staff." The sources of dissatisfaction are somewhat more cryptic: "I need more time to arrange my lifestyle," "the task involved in finding a job wasn't defined." Later in the questionnaire under the heading of Personal Reactions came the following comments: "Helpful, well received, comfortable enough to talk freely," "increased self confidence," "a very positive experience," "greatly encouraged to learn I can continue education and an exciting new life." Some respondents even mentioned the counselors by name, "Debbie," "Maryann," or by function "that helpful young man on the telephone." In summary, it is clear that the Center is operating successfully and owes much of its success to the highly favorable and skillful work of the counselors.

Table 4

Access: Responses on Items Related to Access Ranked by Mean Score

	<u>Very Satis- factory</u>	<u>Satis- factory</u>	<u>Neither Sat. Nor Unsatis- factory</u>	<u>Unsatis- factory</u>	<u>Very Unsatis- factory</u>	<u>No Answer</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>
Amount of time from staff	66	37	1	0	0	(3)	4.5	0.92
Telephone contact	68	44	6	1	0	(36)	4.5	0.64
Hours of operation	72	69	5	1	0	(8)	4.4	0.59
Location	69	67	7	4	0	(8)	4.4	0.70
Number of meetings	35	45	6	0	0	(21)	3.5	1.81
Time you spent on follow up	20	39	21	3	0	(24)	3.0	1.79

b. Access (Table 4)

There are no major problems with access for the clients who reported in this survey. For those who contacted the Center by telephone, there was good agreement as indicated by a low standard deviation that it was a very satisfactory experience. A slightly lower level of satisfaction is communicated about the hours of operation and the location. The pattern of responses about the number of meetings clients were able to arrange and the time spent in the follow up raised more questions than it answers. Ratings on these items were comparatively low and non-response was high suggesting that there is an undefined problem here beyond the scope of the survey instrument.

When we examine the pattern of responses by age and the other control variables, the source of dissatisfaction with location and hours is pinpointed. The negative responses all came from a group of middle-aged, married women but the data tell us nothing of the reasons for their dissatisfaction.

Comments from the open-ended portions of the questionnaire do give us some additional clues about aspects of access. For example, one person was favorably impressed by the "willingness to copy and to lend materials." For another "Center helped me expand my horizons--gave me info and personal contacts." The negative comments on access were usually specific: "Not enough parking," "I wish it had been in a private room," "called (reference) as suggested; they knew nothing about it--very disappointing," "they need a larger staff to handle all the material," "designated parking would be helpful

especially in the evening." There was mention of an "image" problem by two commentators who saw downtown Reading at night as uninviting. A frequent recommendation was for "more advertisement," "more publicity." Some wanted more follow up: "waited a month for results in the mail." Younger clients showed slightly more satisfaction with access than others.

In summary, the overwhelming share of clients who found their way to the Center found access to its services quite satisfactory. The specific comments and suggestions may assist the Center Director exercise certain planning choices and make adjustments in parking but there is no overwhelming mandate for alterations of any type.

Table 5
Information Obtained From Contract

	<u>Very Satis- factory</u>	<u>Satis- factory</u>	<u>Neither Sat. Nor Unsatis- factory</u>	<u>Unsatis- factory</u>	<u>Very Unsatis- factory</u>	<u>No Answer</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>
Accuracy of Information	59	62	13	2	0	(19)	4.3	0.70
Timeliness of Information	63	58	14	2	0	(18)	4.3	0.72
Specific Information expected	61	60	16	9	0	(9)	4.2	0.86
Service at referral	32	37	25	1	0	(60)	4.0	0.80

c. Information (Table 5)

Reactions to those questions dealing with the nature of the information provided or expected reflect lower ratings, large numbers of "no answers," and a relatively large number (14) of unsatisfactory reactions. Much of this can be attributed to the recent nature of client experience. Almost half of the respondents dated their contact in May, June, and July. The fact that many expectations were still unrealized because of limitations of time undoubtedly has an effect but it cannot be accessed from this information.

One place where there is a further suggestion of dissatisfaction is referral. A large number of people picked a neutral position, probably foregoing the option of negative assessments. Apparently, too, some people come to the Center with the expectation of obtaining very specific information and the counseling process did little to modify this narrow view.

The comments give some help with the expectations people had: "Center could use more testing tools to help pinpoint abilities, interests, and personality of clients." Or another view; "Center can't work miracles, might be more valuable if specific advice were given concerning how to go about locating a fulfilling position" or a recommendation that the Center "give aptitude tests to help people decide what they could succeed in" and "improve services and evaluation for those with college degrees and professional occupations particularly women returning to careers after starting families." Even more specific was the recommendation for "more info on job opportunities in this area." On the favorable side, it is clear that the tests that are now given

at LLC are factor in encouraging people to recommend more tests:

"interest tests I took helped me realize there are other jobs available for me," "I discovered I needed professional guidance to determine my real abilities and strengths." Sometimes the favorable reactions are general "Center offers much valuable information," and sometimes very specific: "Needed help with English. The association helped me find a literacy council and _____ college."

There is evidence in the comments of a benefit not specifically captured by our survey questions, numerous as they were. Clients gain from sharing the process of decision making. It comes through in comments about the value of testing; "test results surprised me but were proof of my interests." Even more clearly it is found in the way the experience meshed with ongoing processes; "They taught me to set goals for myself," "Center expanded my horizons," "counselors gave me a lot of information and personal contacts." The point not to be missed here is that the Center offers not only information and support but also assistance to clients with the decisions about how to best use information for their own purposes.

Table 6
Needs at First Contact

Looking back to the time of your first contact with the Center, what needs were important to you?

(1) Career:

	N	Mean Score	Std. Dev.
To Analyze My Job Situation	83	4.4	0.74
To Clarify My Employment Goals	90	4.4	0.70
To Find My First Job	14	4.1	0.73
To Change To A New Job	61	4.3	0.78
To Obtain Part-time Employment	20	3.8	0.93
To Plan For A Lifelong Career	83	4.6	0.57
To Resolve A Family Situation	15	4.1	0.74
To Decide About My Life Goals	83	4.6	0.63

(2) Education:

To Complete My High School Education	17	4.4	0.79
To Complete A Vocational Or Special Training Program	30	4.2	0.82
To Finish My College Education	30	4.3	0.84
To Undertake College Studies	57	4.3	0.74
To Gain Additional Job-related Education	52	4.4	0.69
To Get Training For A New Job	61	4.4	0.74
To Get More Education For Personal Satisfaction	68	4.4	0.77
To Change From One Educational Program To Another	28	4.4	0.79

3. Variables Selected for Significance and Rated for Importance

a. Needs at the Time of First Contact: Career and Educational (Table 6)

The information in Parts II and III of the survey instrument must be read in quite a different way than the ratings in Part I. Here the intent was to have each respondent sort out from a group of choices what topics she/he found applicable or significant. They then had a chance to rate the importance of the selected topics. We have two clues to the significance of an item, the first being the number of persons who identified that particular item, the second being the rating of importance on that item. The table in each case shows both these values. No item was omitted by all respondents.

It can be seen that clarifying employment goals was mentioned most frequently, 90 mentions, but that deciding life goals and planning for career drew higher importance ratings. Analyzing job situations was a considerable interest; 83 mentions, and changing to a new job attracted about one-third of the respondents.

In terms of educational needs, finishing a school program already started at either high school, vocational-technical, or college level was of interest to 77 persons but the importance rating differed with high school completion viewed as most important. Education for personal satisfaction was mentioned by 68 persons and training for new job was not far behind with 61 mentions and the need to find a way for beginning college training was of interest to 57 persons. In summary, the needs of respondents in the sample were about equally divided between educational topics and job related topics but employment matters took a top rating on importance. It is clear that the relationship of education and job is very close for most clients.

Table 7
Information Sought at First Contact

Looking back to the time of your first contact with the Center what information was important to you?

	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>
(1) Career:			
Lists Of Job Opportunities	81	4.5	0.71
Descriptions Of Job Qualifications	82	4.5	0.67
Educational Requirements Of Jobs	90	4.5	0.62
Procedures To Enter Employment	64	4.3	0.78
Support Services For Job Holders; (For Example, Child Care, Etc.)	20	4.1	0.79
(2) Education:			
Information About Testing (Vocational, Entrance, Placement)	64	4.4	0.79
Information On Vocational Or Technical Programs	45	4.4	0.72
Information On College Or Postgraduate Programs	83	4.6	0.58
Procedures For Admission, Readmission, Transfer	57	4.4	0.77
Information On Credit For Military Schooling, On the Job Training	22	4.3	0.83
Financial Aid Information	47	4.4	0.79

b. Information Sought at Time of First Contact: Career and Educational (Table 7)

A list of information items expected at the time of first contact with the Center was also presented for assessment. The major career related information sought by clients was data on the educational requirements of jobs (90 mentions) and information on job qualifications was next most mentioned. A sizable number of persons, 81, looked for lists of job opportunities and they rated this information as quite important, 4.5. There were some distinctions by age on this last point with the highest interest levels found among respondents who were in the late 20s and early 30s. One kind of information drew a surprisingly low response, only 20 persons were concerned about support services for job holders. This topic receives considerable public notice but publicity has expanded impressions about this factor out of its real dimensions of importance for this clientele.

Shifting to educational information, we find the heaviest emphasis on college and postgraduate programs, an interest for 83 persons given high importance, 4.6. Test information has special significance and 64 persons were interested in it. Several of the comments recommended more extensive testing as part of the Center program. Again, there was a surprise in that admission, readmission and transfer, subjects one expects to find taken care of within the framework of an institutional counseling program, were of interest for 57 persons and rated 4.4.

When the tabulations which control for marital status, age, sex, and education are examined in detail, there are few strong distinctions about the expectations people brought to the LLC. Nevertheless,

there are some useful clues. These data are too voluminous for inclusion in the report. Deciding on life goals, for example, is of more interest to women than men. Clarifying employment goals is more significant in the middle years of life. Interest in part-time employment seems to be quite specific to certain life situations showing a rather strong relationship to high "life satisfaction" and to the later years of age. Vocational-technical education appears to have the greatest attraction for single persons in contrast to the data nationally on first time enrollment by age.

4. Outcomes (Table 8)

Possible outcomes presented to respondents covered education and work. They were also ordered from "solid" results in terms of completed action through "planning" behaviors and on to "information gathering" behaviors and finally to "inactivity." From the tabulated responses, it appears that 32 persons completed a significant job adjustment, that is, took a new job or started a job. Similarly, 69 actually enrolled in school, college, or special courses. That means that 101 out of 155 respondents in the tabulation did take some definite action that was in some way related to the association with the Center.

Table 8
Outcomes or Results

<u>Results</u>	<u>N</u>
Changed Job Within Company	4
Changed Job To Another Company	24
Started My First Job	4
Improved My Income	33
Work Is More Satisfactory	32
Enrolled Fulltime In School Or College	31
Enrolled Part-time Or For Special Courses	38
Completed Plans For Job Change	32
Completed Plans For More Education	59
Put In Application For New Job(s)	47
Applied For Admission To An Educational Program	45
Took The GED Or Other Tests	19
Still Gathering Information On Job Change	49
Still Gathering Information On Further Education	81
Life Interests Have Broadened	63
I Have Met Many New People	35
I Have Joined A New Organization	22
My Family Situation Has Improved	19
No Action Has Been Taken: Still Thinking About It	47
No Action Taken: None Is Likely -	5

As we move into the outcomes that reflect planning, it is quite possible that overlapping answers will appear since the person might take a job and plan for education at the same time or vice versa. We found that 79 persons had either completed plans for a job change or applied for a new job while 104 had completed plans for more education or applied for admission. Another 19 took tests. Less active are those still gathering job information, 49 in number, and still gathering educational information, 81, the highest number in any of the "results" category.

There were other outcomes: 63 persons reported that their life interests had been broadened. About a third of the responding group have not yet taken any action.

Considering the short elapsed time since the Center opened its doors the extent of its influence among these clients is rather remarkable. Many of them were apparently ready to act in some way and the contact became a crystallizing or precipitating factor. This suggests that "readiness" might be a condition worth assessing during the early interview sessions. Follow-ups with those who present high readiness might encourage more effective use of limited time and resources.

5. Feelings

The survey instrument also attempted to get at changes in feelings that may have accompanied the association with the Lifelong Learning Center. Because respondents had some difficulty understanding the format in which the choices were presented, not much information

can be gained from these data. Only those who participated in counseling sessions were given the option of answering the question and 59 out of approximately 100 respondents admitted to feeling better and 58 acknowledged "more understanding." One cannot help but be concerned with those few in whom the association with the Center might have precipitated negative feelings, no more than four or five. It is likely, however, to be a manifestation of Tolstoy's observation that happy families are all alike in their happiness but that unhappy families are each unhappy in their own way.

E. Global Measures (Table 9)

Respondents were asked to submit global judgments about two subjects: the experience with the Center, "the way it all turned out," and how they felt about "life as a whole." Using a seven position scale to match the one developed with great care by Withey and Andrews for a national study of social indicators, we can gain a comparison of percentages across various groups. Looking first at client judgments about "how it all turned out," we find 99 judged the experience to be "satisfying" or "very satisfying." Another 23 did not answer the question, possibly because they did not consider the experience to be closed. When we turn to the judgments about life as a whole, we find that the mean score measuring satisfaction of respondents in the Lifelong Learning Center sample of 4.9 to be somewhat below the mean score reported in Withey and Andrews' national sample, 5.3. The percentage distributions are even more interesting than the scores because 13 percent in the national sample were delighted

Table 9
Global Judgments

A - Global Judgment of LLC Experience								
	<u>Very Satis- factor-</u>	<u>Satis- factory</u>	<u>Neither Satis- factory Nor Unsatisfactory</u>	<u>Unsatis- factory</u>	<u>Very Unsatis- factory</u>	<u>No Answer</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>
The Way It All Turned Out	42	57	30	3	0	23	4.0	0.79
B - Global Judgment Of Overall Well-Being (percentage distributions)								
	<u>Delighted</u>	<u>Pleased</u>	<u>Mostly Satisfied</u>	<u>Mixed</u>	<u>Mostly Dissatis- fied</u>	<u>Unhappy</u>	<u>Terrible</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>
National Sample (Withey-Andrews)	13	33	34	13	3	2	2	5.3
LLC Sample	5.7	24.1	36.9	23.4	7.8	2.1	0	4.9
C - Global Judgment of Overall Well-Being By Sex								
Sample by Sex:								
Female	6.0	16.4	44.8	26.9	4.5	1.5	0	
Male	3.1	31.3	18.8	18.8	21.9	6.3	0	

with life, less than half that proportion, 5.7 percent in the LLC sample confessed to ebullience. At the negative end of the scale, there are twice as many in the "mostly dissatisfied" category among the Lifelong Learning Center clients as there are in the population at large. These data suggest that people who come to the Lifelong Learning Center may have specific needs for information and recommendations for action but they also carry with them feelings of discomfort and dissatisfaction about their life situation. At the same time there is no evidence of major life crises to be met. These fragments of data go far toward explaining why such a high value was attached to the quality of the interaction, the concern and nurturing attitudes, exhibited by the counselors and sensed by the clients.

We can gain some further clues about dissatisfaction by looking at the percentage distribution of female and male respondents. These show a bimodal distribution for males with high points in the "mostly dissatisfied" category at one end of the scale and in the "pleased" category at the other end of the scale. In contrast, the distribution for females follows a bell-shaped curve with a slight tilt toward the "dissatisfaction" end. These kinds of global judgments have not been widely used in reaction studies but they appear to add useful interpretive information.

F. Interviews (Table 1-B)

It is difficult and perhaps unwise to dissect anything as personal interview response into categories but some general impressions can be gained by grouping the information. For most of the interviewees, the possibility of a contact with LLC came at the right moment. The nature of that "readiness" differed quite widely. For some it was a crisis; heart attack, job loss, surgery, that required some major adjustment. For others, the condition of readiness grew out of one of the natural transitions of life, that is, a change in family structure, movement from one educational level to another, or a change in marital status. Then, too, there were situations in which a chronic condition of dissatisfaction, a boring job, too little money, a "useless" college degree had existed but were ignored or suppressed until the Center held out a possible method of changing the condition of discomfort. Another group of participants were already moving forward under their own initiative and the Center was one more instrument in that forward movement. Even from such a small sample as this, it is clear that the Center cannot predicate its program on any simplified assumptions about motivation. There was no strong evidence of the "predictable crises of adult life" seen by Gail Sheehy in "Passages."

The interviews also offer some clues about the networking effects leading to the Center as well as from the Center. Public employment offices and private employment agencies, the Workmans Compensation Office, and counseling offices at other institutions all played a part

in referral-in. What happened to clients on referral-out after contact with the Center is a little bit more difficult to discern from these interviews. Lines of contact to the educational institutions, Reading Area Community College, PSU--Berks Campus, University of Pennsylvania, and hospitals are clear enough but the job referral pattern is not clear at all. From some of the comments, it can be inferred that the clients expected further association with the Center but it is unclear where the initiative for that action rested. One person, for example, stated that she/he still needed more information on particular programs and another mentioned need for additional financial aid information. Another cited a need for specialized counseling for "middle aged persons." One person felt that the job information was less "realistic" than the information about education. However, no one voiced strong, negative reactions or feelings about the experience.

G. Other Reactions

The interview also included a question on library usage. Just about half the group, 10, were non-users and twice a month was the most frequent pattern for users.

The rating scale also included questions on how often: (1) information about the LLC was passed on to others, and (2) recommendations about LLC were made to others. (See Table 10).

These data confirm in still another way the fact that clients in the surveyed group regarded the services of the Center as not only favorable but worthwhile. There is another important fact buried in this response. Very often counseling activities are regarded as

Table 10
Transmittal of Information About LLC to Others

	Often	Occasionally	Never	No Answer
A. How often have you passed the information on to others?	29	82	27	(17)
B. How often have you recommended the Center to others?	25	76	32	(22)

therapeutic rather than normative. Such a view creates an attitude that one seeks counseling only when something is wrong. The willingness to convey information to others which is endorsed by more than two-thirds of the respondents seems to reflect a perception that the Center is generally useful and positive rather than remedial. Such a normative view of counseling activity has been difficult to achieve in most counseling operations.

H. Some Observations and Speculations on the Study

The results of this study, within the limitations of the sample, are so filled with expressions of approval from clients of the Lifelong Learning Center that they should be strongly encouraging to all who had a part in its creation. The area of adult counseling is so broad and unexplored that the first intuitive step toward establishing such a Center must have been an act of faith. The subsequent steps were guided by reason however and the plan effected at Reading reflects an excellent appreciation for the nature of the community and the needs of its citizens. The data gathered here offer partial but forceful validation of the basic idea. Information about education and careers is useful and its value is multiplied by a counseling setting in which the user finds understanding, support, and guidance for decisions that lead to action.

At the same time, interesting questions emerge from this study, many of them too complex for survey analysis. What are the various ways in which the counseling situation enhances personal use of information? by reinforcement? explanation? confirmation? nurturance?

Is the readiness factor which seems evident in one section of the data a significant element in the effectiveness of the Center for clients?

What are the interlocking relationships between employment, education, and living under various conditions of adult life?

How can the network relationships among many agencies, a condition on which the whole counseling center approach depends, be created and sustained?

Is there an underlying common process to changes in adult life?

Few of these questions can be answered at this point by means of the traditional frameworks of isolated laboratory research. They will be met first at the level of operations. The most appropriate forms of address for such conditions is likely to be one in which practitioners and researchers meet in the field setting.

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APPENDIX A

THE SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

**LIFELONG
LEARNING
CENTER, READING, PA.**

**CLIENT REACTION STUDY
FORM I**

Please rate your personal association with the Lifelong Learning Center by placing an "X" in the appropriate circle opposite each statement. Skip those which do not apply.

PART I: A. HOW SATISFACTORY WAS/WERE:

1. The hours of operation for meeting your particular needs?
2. The location of the Center in downtown Reading?
3. The telephone contact you made with the Center?
4. The opportunity to explain fully what your interests and needs were?
5. The Center in providing the specific information you expected to get?
6. The accuracy of the information given to you by the staff?
7. The timeliness of the information? Was it up-to-date?
8. The service at offices, agencies, or persons to whom you were referred by the Center?
9. The way it all turned out, the total experience of contacting the Center, counseling or meetings, and follow up activities?

Very Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Neither Satisfactory Nor Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very Unsatisfactory
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

- B. Are there other parts of the experience about which you feel:
 particularly satisfied? _____
 particularly dissatisfied? _____
- C. What was the approximate date of your first contact with the Lifelong Learning Center?

 Month Year

(Over)

PART II: Please look over the list of items below. Then rate their importance to you by an "X" in the appropriate space to the right of those that apply.

A. Looking back to the time of your first contact with the Center, what needs were important to you?

(1) CAREER:

- To Analyze My Job Situation
- To Clarify My Employment Goals
- To Find My First Job
- To Change To A New Job
- To Obtain Part-time Employment
- To Plan For A Lifelong Career
- To Resolve A Family Situation
- To Decide About My Life Goals

Other _____

(2) EDUCATION:

- To Complete My High School Education
- To Complete A Vocational Or Special Training Program
- To Finish My College Education
- To Undertake College Studies
- To Gain Additional Job-related Education
- To Get Training For A New Job
- To Get More Education For Personal Satisfaction
- To Change From One Educational Program To Another

Other _____

B. Looking back to the time of your first contact with the Center what information was important to you?

(1) CAREER:

- Lists Of Job Opportunities
- Descriptions Of Job Qualifications
- Educational Requirements Of Jobs
- Procedures To Enter Employment
- Support Services For Job Holders; (For Example, Child Care, Etc.)

Other _____

(2) EDUCATION:

- Information About Testing (Vocational, Entrance, Placement)
- Information On Vocational Or Technical Programs
- Information On College Or Postgraduate Programs
- Procedures For Admission, Readmission, Transfer
- Information On Credit For Military Schooling, On the Job Training, Etc.
- Financial Aid Information

Other _____

Very Important
Important
Of Some Importance
Not Applicable

☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
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☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐

PART III: A. Please look over the following list of results which might have developed from your association with the Lifelong Learning Center. Then rate their importance to you by an "X" in the appropriate space to the right.

RESULTS

Changed Job Within Company
 Changed Job To Another Company
 Started My First Job
 Improved My Income
 Work Is More Satisfactory
 Enrolled Fulltime In School Or College
 Enrolled Part-time Or For Special Courses
 Completed Plans For Job Change
 Completed Plans For More Education
 Put In Application For New Job(s)
 Applied For Admission To An Educational Program
 Took The GED Or Other Tests
 Still Gathering Information On Job Change
 Still Gathering Information On Further Education
 Life Interests Have Broadened
 I Have Met Many New People
 I Have Joined A New Organization
 My Family Situation Has Improved
 No Action Has Been Taken: Still Thinking About It
 No Action Taken: None Is Likely
 Other _____

Very Important	Important	Of Some Importance	Not Applicable
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐

B. How do you feel about your life as a whole?

Delighted	Pleased	Mostly Satisfied	Mixed	Mostly Dissatisfied	Unhappy	Terrible
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

C. Please add any other comments that describe your personal reaction to the experience at the Center. Use the back of this page if more space is needed.

(Over)

PART IV. A. Information about the Lifelong Learning Center may be of use to others.

a. How often have you passed the information on to others?

b. How often have you recommended the Center to others?

B. Please add any recommendations that might improve the service the Center could offer to others.

Often
Occasionally
Never

☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐

**LIFE LONG
LEARNING
CENTER, READING, PA.**

CLIENT REACTION STUDY

FORM 11

Please rate your personal association with the Lifelong Learning Center by placing an "X" in the appropriate circle opposite each statement. Skip those which do not apply.

PART 1: A. HOW SATISFACTORY WAS/WERE:

- | | Very Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Neither Satisfactory
Nor Unsatisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Very Unsatisfactory |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. The <u>hours of operation</u> for meeting your particular needs? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2. The <u>amount of time</u> the staff gave to answer your questions? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3. The <u>time you spent</u> in following up the counselor's suggestions or gathering additional information? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4. The <u>location</u> of the Center in downtown Reading? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 5. The <u>telephone contact</u> you made with the Center? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6. The <u>willingness and receptivity</u> of the staff to questions you raised with them? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 7. The <u>amount of attention</u> they gave to answering your needs? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 8. The <u>competence</u> of the personnel who worked with you? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 9. The <u>opportunity to explain</u> fully what your interests and needs were? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 10. The Center in providing the <u>specific information</u> you expected to get? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 11. The <u>number of meetings</u> you were able to arrange with the staff? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 12. The <u>accuracy</u> of the information given to you by the staff? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 13. The <u>timeliness</u> of the information? Was it up-to-date? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 14. The service at offices, agencies, or persons <u>to whom you were referred</u> by the Center? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 15. The <u>level of comfort</u> you felt in discussing your particular needs with the Center staff? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 16. The <u>way it all turned out</u> , the total experience of contacting the Center, counseling or meetings, and follow up activities? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

- B. Are there other parts of the experience about which you feel:
 particularly satisfied? _____
 particularly dissatisfied? _____

- C. What was the approximate date of your first contact with the Lifelong Learning Center?

 Month Year

(Over)

PART II: Please look over the list of items below. Then rate their importance to you by an "X" in the appropriate space to the right of those that apply.

A. Looking back to the time of your first contact with the Center, what needs were important to you?

(1) CAREER:

- To Analyze My Job Situation
- To Clarify My Employment Goals
- To Find My First Job
- To Change To A New Job
- To Obtain Part-time Employment
- To Plan For A Lifelong Career
- To Resolve A Family Situation
- To Decide About My Life Goals

Very Important
Important
Of Some Importance
Not Applicable

☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐

Other _____

(2) EDUCATION:

- To Complete My High School Education
- To Complete A Vocational Or Special Training Program
- To Finish My College Education
- To Undertake College Studies
- To Gain Additional Job-related Education
- To Get Training For A New Job
- To Get More Education For Personal Satisfaction
- To Change From One Educational Program To Another

☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐

Other _____

B. Looking back to the time of your first contact with the Center what information was important to you?

(1) CAREER:

- Lists Of Job Opportunities
- Descriptions Of Job Qualifications
- Educational Requirements Of Jobs
- Procedures To Enter Employment
- Support Services For Job Holders; (For Example, Child Care, Etc.)

☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐

Other _____

(2) EDUCATION:

- Information About Testing (Vocational, Entrance, Placement)
- Information On Vocational Or Technical Programs
- Information On College Or Postgraduate Programs
- Procedures For Admission, Readmission, Transfer
- Information On Credit For Military Schooling, On The Job Training, Etc.
- Financial Aid Information

☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐
☐	☐	☐	☐

Other _____

PART III: A. Please look over the following list of results which might have developed from your association with the Lifelong Learning Center. Then rate their importance to you by an "X" in the appropriate space to the right.

RESULTS

Changed Job Within Company
 Changed Job To Another Company
 Started My First Job
 Improved My Income
 Work Is More Satisfactory
 Enrolled Fulltime In School Or College
 Enrolled Part-time Or For Special Courses
 Completed Plans For Job Change
 Completed Plans For More Education
 Put In Application For New Job(s)
 Applied For Admission To An Educational Program
 Took The GED Or Other Tests
 Still Gathering Information On Job Change
 Still Gathering Information On Further Education
 Life Interests Have Broadened
 I Have Met Many New People
 I Have Joined A New Organization
 My Family Situation Has Improved
 No Action Has Been Taken: Still Thinking About It
 No Action Taken: None Is Likely
 Other _____

Very Important
 Important
 Of Some Importance
 Not Applicable

B. How do you feel about your life as a whole?
 Delighted Pleased Mostly Satisfied Mixed Mostly Dissatisfied Unhappy Terrible

C. Please add any other comments that describe your personal reaction to the experience at the Center. Use the back of this page if more space is needed.

(Over)

D. If the way you look at things or your feelings have been influenced by your contact with the Center, please place an "X" to the left or to the right of the "no change" marker so as to indicate the direction and intensity of that change.

Feel Better	_____	_____	NO CHANGE	_____	_____	Feel Worse
More Self Confidence	_____	_____			_____	More Self Doubt
More Understanding	_____	_____			_____	More Confusion
More Knowledgeable	_____	_____			_____	Less Knowledgeable
More Assertive	_____	_____			_____	More Submissive
More Optimistic	_____	_____			_____	More Pessimistic
More Realistic	_____	_____			_____	More Idealistic
More Contented	_____	_____			_____	More Agitated
More Deliberate	_____	_____			_____	More Impulsive
More Enthusiastic	_____	_____			_____	More Depressed

PART IV: A. Information about the Lifelong Learning Center may be of use

Occasionally
Never

PART IV: A. Information about the Lifelong Learning Center may be of use to others.

a. How often have you passed the information on to others?

b. How often have you recommended the Center to others?

B. Please add any recommendations that might improve the service the Center could offer to others.

C. If you are willing to participate in a brief telephone interview between August 22 and September 2, please give your number and the most suitable times.

Telephone: (Area code _____) _____
Time: (Dates _____ Hours _____)
(Dates _____ Hours _____)
(Dates _____ Hours _____)
(Dates _____ Hours _____)

Return to: Center for the Study of Higher Education (Use Postpaid Envelope)
The Pennsylvania State University
324 Pond Laboratory
University Park, PA 16802

Thank you for your help

APPENDIX B

THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Phone No. _____

August 30, 1977

ID Number _____

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Hello, Mr./Ms. _____, I am with the research group that is working with the Lifelong Learning Center in Reading. I believe you have talked with counselors at the Center? Haven't you?

1. **NO:** Is there another person at this location who may have participated?
NO: Very well, thank you.

"YES": Your answers on the questionnaire were helpful in telling us how the Center operates. However, this kind of service is quite new and we would like to know how the experience with the Center fitted into your own life. We are not trying to evaluate anything you did. We do need information about how useful the contact might have been to you personally. Will you help us?

Pause for response; if negative, record and close interview.

____ Refused to answer

If further question, record here _____

2. Did some change in the pattern of your life lead you to contact the Center?

(a) Yes: _____

(b) **No:** What did motivate your meeting at the Center?

3. Are you a regular library visitor or user?

YES: How often? _____

NO: [Go to 5]

4. Did you contact other sources for assistance before calling the Center?

☐ NO: [Go to 5]

(a) YES: Which sources?

(b) Were they also helpful:

☐ NO: [Go to 5]

YES: In what ways?

5. After contacting the Center did you get in touch with other offices, agencies, or persons?

☐ NO: [Go to 6]

YES: Were all of these offices suggested by the Center counselors?

YES:

NO: What prompted your decision to contact them?

6. After counseling with the Center staff did you talk over the information and experience with anyone?

☐ NO: [Go to 7]

YES: Who?

Did he/she offer any additional information or suggestions?

[Move to next page]

☐ NO: [Go to 7]

YES: What were they? _____

7. Did you act on any of the suggestions that came out of the experience with the Center?

☐ NO: [Go to 8]

[Prompt to determine result]

YES: How? _____

8. Have there been other major decisions in your life since you contacted the Center?

☐ NO: [Go to 10]

YES: What were they? _____

Did your experience with the Center counseling have anything to do with the decision?

☐ NO: [Go to 9]

YES: In what way? _____

9. Are there still other problems to be solved before you can act on those suggestions?

☐ NO: [Go to 10]

YES: What are they? _____

10. Do you feel there are other services the Center should offer to persons who come in for counseling?

☐ NO: [Go to 11]

YES: Could you give some examples? _____

11. Would you like to share any other ideas, feelings, or suggestions about how the Center fitted into your recent experiences?

☐ NO: [Go to close]

YES: _____

We really appreciate your help, thank you!

APPENDIX C

FREQUENCY OF RESPONSE BY ITEM (TOTAL RETURNS)

PART I: A. HOW SATISFACTORY WAS/WERE:

	No Answer	Very Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Neither Satisfactory Nor Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Very Unsatisfactory
1. The <u>hours of operation</u> for meeting your particular needs?	9	72	74	6	1	
2. The <u>amount of time</u> the staff gave to answer your questions?	3	66	39	1		
3. The <u>time you spent</u> in following up the counselor's suggestions or gathering additional information?	25	20	39	22	3	
4. The <u>location</u> of the Center in downtown Reading?	8	71	71	7	4	1
5. The <u>telephone contact</u> you made with the Center?	37	71	46	7	1	
6. The <u>willingness and receptivity</u> of the staff to questions you raised with them?	2	72	35			
7. The <u>amount of attention</u> they gave to answering your needs?	3	60	41	4	1	
8. The <u>competence</u> of the personnel who worked with you?	5	57	43	3	1	
9. The <u>opportunity to explain</u> fully what your interests and needs were?	8	92	48	12	2	
10. The Center in providing the <u>specific information</u> you expected to get?	10	64	62	16	10	
11. The <u>number of meetings</u> you were able to arrange with the staff?	21	35	47	6		
12. The <u>accuracy</u> of the information given to you by the staff?	20	63	63	14	2	
13. The <u>timeliness</u> of the information? Was it up-to-date?	18	66	61	14	3	
14. The service at offices, agencies, or persons <u>to whom you were referred</u> by the Center?	61	35	39	26	1	
15. The <u>level of comfort</u> you felt in discussing your particular needs with the Center staff?	4	56	44	5		
16. The way it all turned out, the total experience of contacting the Center, counseling or meetings, and follow up activities?	24	44	60	31	3	

PART II: A. Looking back to the time of your first contact with the Center,
what needs were Important to you?

(1) CAREER:

	Very Important	Important	Of Some Importance	Not Applicable
To Analyze My Job Situation	45	29	13	75
To Clarify My Employment Goals	51	32	11	68
To Find My First Job	4	7	3	148
To Change To A New Job	31	20	13	98
To Obtain Part-time Employment	7	3	11	141
To Plan For A Lifelong Career	58	22	6	76
To Resolve A Family Situation	5	7	4	146
To Decide About My Life Goals	61	17	8	76
Other	5	2	2	153

(2) EDUCATION:

To Complete My High School Education	11	4	3	144
To Complete A Vocational Or Special Training Program	14	9	7	132
To Finish My College Education	16	7	7	132
To Undertake College Studies	27	22	9	104
To Gain Additional Job-related Education	30	18	6	108
To Get Training For A New Job	35	18	10	99
To Get More Education For Personal Satisfaction	37	20	12	93
To Change From One Educational Program To Another	9	6	5	132
Other	5	4	3	150

B. Looking back to the time of your first contact with the Center,
what information was Important to you?

(1) CAREER:

Lists Of Job Opportunities	51	22	10	79
Descriptions Of Job Qualifications	46	31	8	77
Educational Requirements Of Jobs	55	32	7	68
Procedures To Enter Employment	33	20	13	96
Support Services For Job Holders; (For Example, Child Care Etc.)	7	8	5	142
Other	4	2	2	154

(2) EDUCATION:

Information About Testing (Vocational, Entrance, Placement)	37	15	13	97
Information On Vocational Or Technical Programs	24	15	7	116
Information On College Or Postgraduate Programs	56	25	5	76
Procedures For Admission, Readmission, Transfer	33	15	11	103
Information On Credit For Military Schooling, On The Job Training, Etc.	11	6	5	140
Financial Aid Information	26	13	10	113
Other	1		1	160

PART III: A. Please look over the following list of results which might have developed from your association with the Lifelong Learning Center. Then rate their importance.

RESULTS

	Very Important	Important	Of Some Importance	Not Applicable
Changed Job Within Company	2	3	157	
Changed Job To Another Company	12	8	5	137
Started My First Job	2	2		158
Improved My Income	21	8	5	128
Work Is More Satisfactory	16	12	5	129
Enrolled Fulltime In School Or College	13	9	9	131
Enrolled Part-time Or For Special Courses	17	21	2	122
Completed Plans For Job Change	16	7	10	129
Completed Plans For More Education	32	18	11	101
Put In Application For New Job(s)	31	13	4	114
Applied For Admission To An Educational Program	29	13	6	114
Took The GED Or Other Tests	11	5	3	143
Still Gathering Information On Job Change	26	18	6	112
Still Gathering Information On Further Education	43	29	12	78
Life Interests Have Broadened	32	18	14	98
I Have Met Many New People	14	12	11	125
I Have Joined A New Organization	12	8	4	138
My Family Situation Has Improved	7	7	6	142
No Action Has Been Taken: Still Thinking About It	24	14	11	113
No Action Taken: None Is Likely	2		4	156
Other				162

B. How do you feel about your life as a whole?

<u>Delighted</u>	<u>Pleased</u>	<u>Mostly Satisfied</u>	<u>Mixed</u>	<u>Mostly Dissatisfied</u>	<u>Unhappy</u>	<u>Terrible</u>	<u>No Answer</u>
8	35	55	35	12	3		14

- D. If the way you look at things or your feelings have been influenced by your contact with the Center, please indicate the direction and intensity of that change.

NO CHANGE

	Very Much +	Much +		Much -	Very Much -	
Feel Better	30	27		2		Feel Worse
More Self Confidence	18	31		2	1	More Self Doubt
More Understanding	27	29			2	More Confusion
More Knowledgeable	25	27		1		Less Knowledgeable
More Assertive	12	33		2	1	More Submissive
More Optimistic	18	33		1		More Pessimistic
More Realistic	24	30		1		More Idealistic
More Contented	13	29		2	1	More Agitated
More Deliberate	18	28		1		More Impulsive
More Enthusiastic	21	25		3	2	More Depressed

- PART IV. A. Information about the Lifelong Learning Center may be of use to others.

a. How often have you passed the information on to others?	Often Occasionally Never	31 85 28
b. How often have you recommended the Center to others?		27 80 32

- C. If you are willing to participate in a brief telephone interview between August 22 and September 2, please give your number and the most suitable times.

NO: 66 YES: 42